

Gala Benefit Concert

Sunday 21st April 2002



An evening of arias, choruses & ensembles from a selection of popular operas

*Dennis O'Neill, Anthony Kearns,
Suzanne Murphy, Regina Nathan,
Gerard O'Connor, Bruno Caproni
& Leandra Overmann*



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Welcome to our special Gala Benefit Concert

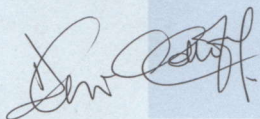
I do hope you enjoy this special evening of music making with some of Ireland's best known artists. We have chosen the programme of arias, choruses and ensembles from some of the most popular operas.

Opera Ireland, just like every opera company around the world, finds that even if every seat is filled for every performance, ticket sales only cover a small percentage of what it costs to produce what you see onstage. We are grateful for our annual provision from An Chomhairle Ealaíon/The Arts Council and the commitment from all our dedicated sponsors and friends, who through their generous support, allow us to keep ticket prices as low as possible.

The Gala Benefit Concert is presented to help us continue our task of producing high quality opera and in maintaining our student support programmes such as the Master Classes and our soon to be created Opera Studio.

Our sincere thanks to this evening's guest artists and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra for giving us their time and wonderful talents so generously.

Enjoy the performance.



David Collopy
Chief Executive

Presented by
Dieter Kaegi
Artistic Director

Concert Co-ordinator
Angela McCrone

Featuring

Sopranos

Regina Nathan and Suzanne Murphy

Mezzo-Soprano

Leandra Overmann

Tenors

Anthony Kearns and Dennis O'Neill

Baritone

Bruno Caproni

Bass

Gerard O'Connor

Conductor

David T. Heusel

For information on becoming a friend or patron contact:
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Check out our NEW website at: www.operaireland.com

Order of performances this evening

Part One

Rossini: *Il barbiere di Siviglia* Overture
performed by RTÉCO

Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* "Il lacerato spirito"
(Fiesco) sung by Gerard O'Connor

Puccini: *La Bohème* "Mi chiamano Mimi"
(Mimi) sung by Regina Nathan

Donizetti: *L'elisir d'amore* "Una furtiva lagrima"
(Nemorino) sung by Anthony Kearns

Cilea: *Adriana Lecouvreur* "Poveri fiori"
(Adriana) sung by Suzanne Murphy

Verdi: *Ernani* "Oh de' verd'anni miei"
(Carlo) sung by Bruno Caproni

Verdi: *Il trovatore* "Condotta ell'era in ceppi"
(Azucena) sung by Leandra Overmann

Verdi: *Il trovatore* "Vedi! Le fosche"
(Gypsies) sung by Opera Ireland Chorus

Verdi: *Ernani* "Sire, fia ver"
(Elvira/Carlo) sung by Suzanne Murphy and Bruno Caproni

Verdi: *Luisa Miller* "Quando le sere al placido"
(Rodolfo) sung by Dennis O'Neill

Part Two

Puccini: *Manon Lescaut* Intermezzo
performed by RTÉCO

Mascagni: *Cavalleria rusticana* "Voi lo sapete, o mamma"
(Santuzza) sung by Suzanne Murphy

Verdi: *Macbeth* "Ah, la paterna mano"
(Macduff) sung by Anthony Kearns

Verdi: *Don Carlo* "O don fatale"
(Eboli) sung by Leandra Overmann

Verdi: *Macbeth* "Pietà, rispetto, amore"
(Macbeth) sung by Bruno Caproni

Catalani: *La Wally* "Ebben? Ne andrò lontana"
(Wally) sung by Regina Nathan

Verdi: *Macbeth* "Come dal ciel precipita"
(Banquo) sung by Gerard O'Connor

Puccini: *Tosca* "Recondita armonia"
(Cavaradossi) sung by Dennis O'Neill

Puccini: *Turandot* "Nessun dorma"
(Calaf) sung by Dennis O'Neill

Verdi: *Rigoletto* "Bella figlia dell'amore"
(Duke/Maddellena/Rigoletto/Gilda)
sung by Anthony Kearns, Leandra Overmann,
Bruno Caproni and Regina Nathan

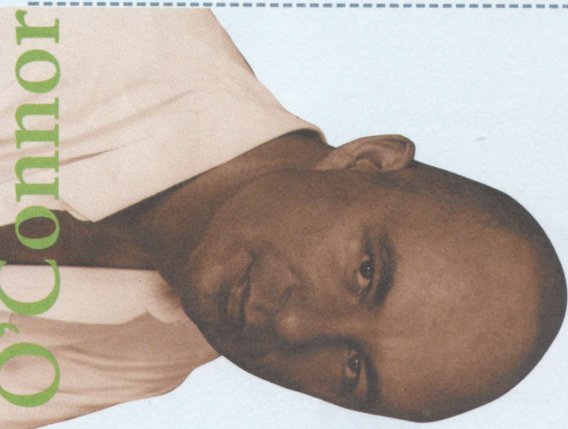
Verdi: *Nabucco* "Va, pensiero"
(Hebrew slaves) sung by Opera Ireland Chorus

Bruno Caproni



Bruno Caproni – Baritone (Ireland)

Bruno Caproni was born in Bangor, Co Down, of Italian extraction. He studied in Belfast and at the RNCM and the National Opera Studio. From 1993-1997 he was a principal baritone at the Hessische Staatstheater Darmstadt and now holds the same position with the Cologne Opera. Guest engagements have taken him to most of the major opera houses in mainland Europe, including Hamburg, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Vienna Staatsoper and La Scala Milan; the UK (WNO, ENO and Covent Garden); and the USA (Dallas, San Francisco, and the Metropolitan). Future engagements include operas by Verdi, Ponchielli, Puccini and Donizetti in Cologne, Valencia, Covent Garden, Vienna and the Metropolitan. He last appeared with DGOS in 1987 as Schaunard in *La Boheme*.



Gerard O'Connor

Gerard O'Connor – Bass (Ireland)

Gerard O'Connor, an Opera Ireland regular, won critical praise for his Boris Ismailov in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and the Croucher in *The Silver Tassie*. He is currently a member of ENO where his roles include Ismailov, Truelove in *The Rake's Progress* and Hunding in *The Valkyrie*. Recent concert engagements included roles in *Tannhäuser* and *Der Freischütz* for Chelsea Opera Group, Talbot in *Giovanna d'Arco* and Banquo in *Macbeth* for the Amici di Verdi, Mamirov in the European premiere of *The Enchantress* at Brighton, and two roles in *L'enfance du Christ* at the NCH. Engagements in 2002 include Supreme Pontiff in *La Vestale* and The Croucher at ENO; and Wagner's Hunding and Fafner for ENO, and Hunding and Hagen with the NYOI.

Anthony Kearns – Tenor (Ireland)

Anthony Kearns is well known as one of the phenomenally successful Irish Tenors trio that has performed all over the world and sold huge numbers of CD's and videos. In his own right he is a regular recitalist and has sung the roles of Macduff in *Macbeth* and Alfredo in *La traviata* for Lyric Opera at the NCH. A pupil of Veronica Dunne and currently studying with Conor Farran and Patrick Healy, he has won multiple awards at the Feis Ceoil as well as the Dermot Troy trophy in the 1999 Veronica Dunne International Singing competition. He has performed on television and radio worldwide. Future engagements include a solo concert tour of the US and *The Irish Ring* at Carnegie Hall in September.



Anthony Kearns

Dennis O'Neill CBE – Tenor (UK)

Born in Wales of Irish and Welsh parents, Dennis O'Neill is one of the world's leading Verdi tenors. He enjoys a close relationship with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. North American engagements have included The Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, the San Francisco, San Diego and Vancouver Operas, the Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras, the Montreal and Ottawa Symphony Orchestras and the Cincinnati Festival. In Europe he has been a frequent guest at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich as well as at the opera houses of Vienna, Berlin, Bonn, Cologne, Hamburg, Paris, Nice, Zurich, Brussels, Oslo, Barcelona, Oviedo, Verona and Turin. Besides being a distinguished artist in concert and on television, Dennis O'Neill has made numerous opera recordings for Chandos

Dennis O'Neill



Suzanne Murphy



Suzanne Murphy – Soprano (Ireland)

Limerick-born Suzanne Murphy has had a distinguished opera career. She joined Welsh National Opera in 1976 and her international engagements have included Constanze and Donna Anna for ENO, the four soprano roles in *Hoffmann* for Opera North and Constanze and Hanna Glawari for Scottish Opera. In 1987 she made a triumphant debut at the Vienna Staatsoper as Elettra in *Idomeneo* conducted by Nikolaus Harnoncourt, since when she has had numerous engagements with the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin and Geneva Opera and has sung Mrs Grose in *Turn of the Screw* for Frankfurt Opera. Her large repertoire also includes Janáček's *Kostelnicka* and the title roles in *La traviata* and *Norma*, both of which she sang with DGOS.



Leandra Overmann – Mezzo-soprano (Yugoslavia)

Leandra Overmann studied in Belgrade and Rome as well as at the opera studios in Detmold and Cologne. She has won many prizes, including one for singing the role of Fidalma in Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto* at an international competition in Turin. In 1955, after singing as a coloratura mezzo in Freiburg, Belgrade and Bonn, she made the transition to dramatic mezzo, in which *Fach* her repertoire ranges from Handel and Cimarosa to Zimmermann and Birtwistle. Recently working mainly in Bonn and Basle, but heard also in other major European centres, her roles include Verdi's Azucena, Ulrica, Eboli and Quickly; Wagner's Erda, Fricka and Waltraute; and dramatic parts in the operas of Strauss and Janáček. She joined the Hannover State Opera this season.

Regina Nathan – Soprano (Ireland)

Regina Nathan has sung major lyric soprano roles throughout her career. For Opera Ireland she has sung Susanna, Zerlina, Mimi, Butterfly, Antonia, Violetta and Cleopatra. She has appeared with Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Opéra de Nante, Scottish Opera and Israeli Opera as well as in Lucerne and at the Concertgebouw. She has also sung opera in Madrid, Brussels, Hamburg and Geneva. Concert engagements include Mahler's 4th Symphony (Brussels), Mozart's *Exultate Jubilate* (Brussels and Israel), Mahler's 8th Symphony (Concertgebouw and Royal Albert Hall), Beethoven's 9th Symphony (Israel) and Rachmaninov's *The Bells* at London's RFH. In 1998 she performed at the opening concert for the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur. Her recordings include Britten, Mahler, Donizetti's *Maria de Rudenz* and a solo album *With Love*.



Regina Nathan

David T. Heusel (USA) Conductor

David T. Heusel, who is working with Opera Ireland for the seventh time, has a repertoire of more than 90 operas, operettas, ballets and music-theatre works. Beginning his career in Richmond, Indiana, in 1975, he moved to Germany in 1981 and held various posts at Oberhausen, Kiel and Dortmund before becoming Assistant Conductor of the Philharmonic Orchestra in Nice in 1990. He later worked at both the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique in Paris as well as assisting Levine on Wagner's *Ring* at Bayreuth in 1994 and 1997. Since 1997 he has free-lanced in Europe, Japan, and the USA. He is currently Musical Director of the Sakai City Opera, in Osaka, Japan. Future engagements include a concert, operas and ballets in Riga, Osaka, Copenhagen, Toulouse and Nice.



David T. Heusel

RTÉ Concert Orchestra

First Violins

Therèse Timoney (leader),
Michael Healy (co-leader), Mircea Petcu,
Pamela Forde, Eileen Murphy,
Sunniva Fitzpatrick, Ruth Murphy,
Sebastien Petiet

Second Violins

Elizabeth Leonard, Paul O'Hanlon,
Carol Quigley, Debby Ellis, Arthur McIver,
Donal Roche

Violas

Thomas Kane, Michelle Lalor,
Elizabeth Dean, Carla Vedres

Cellos

David James, Hilary O'Donovan,
Sheelagh Nesbitt, Jane Hughes

Double Basses

Seamus Doyle, Liam Wylie

Flutes

Deirdre Brady, Ann Macken

Piccolo

Ann Macken

Oboes

Peter Healy, David Agnew

Cor Anglais

David Agnew

Clarinets

Michael Seaver, Jean Duncan

Bass Clarinet

Jean Duncan

Bassoons

John Leonard, Carole Block

Horns

David Carmody, Declan McCarthy,
Fearghal O Ceallachain, Stephen Hogan

Trumpets

Shaun Hooke, David Martin, Eoin Daly

Trombones

Stephen Mathieson, David Weakley

Bass Trombone

Patrick Kennedy

Timpani

John Fennessy

Percussion

Massimo Marraccini, Lloyd Byrne,
Peadar Townsend

Harp

Triona Marshall

Opera Ireland Chorus

Sopranos:

Alison Browne, Celine Byrne, Sinéad Campbell,
Fionnuala De Búrca, Aoife Dunne,
Donna Gallagher, Máire Mullarkey, Áine Mulvey,
Méav Ní Mhaolchatha, Sarah Power

Mezzos:

Joyce Byrne, Alison Dunne, Julie Feeney,
Victoria Massey, Cora Newman,
Niamh O'Connell, Niamh O' Hanlon,
Marcella Robinson, Zane Senavska

Tenors:

Warwick Harte, Colm Lalor, Tony Madden,
John McKeown, Derek Moloney,
Eamonn Mulhall, Mark Spyropoulos,
Brian Callinan

Basses:

Martin Briody, Des Capliss, John Dempsey,
Stephen Fennelly, Jeffrey Ledwidge,
Martin McAnaney, Eunan McDonald,
Simon Morgan, Lorcan O'Byrne,
Manus O'Donnell

Cathal Garvey

Cathal Garvey made his Opera Ireland debut as Chorus Master for *Boris Godunov* in 1999, and has since earned critical acclaim for his work on *Aida*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and *Don Carlo* among others. Born in Cork, he studied at the Cork School of Music and later read Music at UCC. As a conductor, Cathal has worked with the RTECO, the NSOI, and several choirs and orchestras in Cork. From 1997, he was Chorus Master and Assistant Conductor for Opera South in Cork, working on productions of *La Bohème* and *Il trovatore*. In 1999, he conducted IORC's successful run of *Me and My Girl* in Cork and Dublin. He also acts as Chorus Master for Lyric Opera and Anna Livia Opera.